

the test

This guy walking down the street
with his ego on a leash never learned
to do without diapers and he sucks his
rubber tit for the last drop of sympathy,
hunts for a shoulder to hang over while
he belches. He is windy with alienation
and hates his father-and-mother, my god,
at his age he still hates his parents.
Oh, he sobs inside as he talks to himself
about the big L (you know, life) and feels
sorely about gravel inside his shoes which
he insists on keeping, look at him, he minces
down the sidewalk in a half-assed trot,
cuddling little ego in his arms, keeps up
a perfectly unintelligible chatter to which
no one listens. and hopes to feel lonely enough
to have one genuine solid-silver hammered out
emotion to talk about -- let's hit him in the
teeth with a couple of hard facts and see
if he runs.

-- James Hearst

Cedar Falls, Iowa

Family 11

The youngest uncle
was a well adjusted child,
neat for rompered photographs
collecting bees and dragon flowers
till he fell to love
that black eyed girl who
wouldn't let him
and the family said to wait,
so he played at selling shoes
for thirty years,
humping telephone operators
on buying trips to the city,
playing saxophones off-key
then bringing shoe-trees to the
governor and always being re-elected,
always what he wanted the people
said and business staying
good enough for anybody single.
They didn't know the times he sighed
that all the girls he ever took
to the inaugural ball
had palegrey eyes.